

REMARKS / ARGUMENTS

I. Status of the Claims

Claims 3-15, 20-32, 34-36, 39-40, and 43-54 remain pending in this application.

Claims 1-2, 16-19, 33, 37-38, and 41-42 have been cancelled herein. Claims 3-9, 13, 20-25, 28, 31-32, 34-36, 39-40, and 54 are currently amended herein.

In the Office Action, the Examiner indicated that claims 43-53 are allowable.

II. Remarks Regarding Claims 4-15, 20-32, 34-35, and 39, Which Stand Objected To As Depending Upon a Rejected Base Claim

In the Office Action, the Examiner objected to claims 4-15, 20-32, 34-35, and 39 as depending upon a rejected base claim, but indicated that the subject claims would be allowable if rewritten in independent form.

Applicants have amended claim 4 to rewrite it as an independent claim, and have amended claims 5-9 to depend from amended claim 4. Claims 10-12 depend from claim 9, which as noted has been amended to depend from amended claim 4.

Applicants have amended claim 13 to rewrite it as an independent claim. Claims 14-15 depend from amended claim 13.

Applicants have amended claim 20 to rewrite it as an independent claim, and have amended claims 21-25 to depend from amended claim 20. Claims 26-27 depend from claim 25, which as noted has been amended to depend from amended claim 20.

Applicants have amended claim 28 to rewrite it as an independent claim. Claims 29-30 depend from claim 28, which as noted has been amended and rewritten in independent form. Claims 31-32 have been amended to depend from amended claim 28.

Applicants have amended claim 34 to rewrite it as an independent claim, and have amended claim 35 to depend from amended claim 34.

Applicants have amended claim 39 to rewrite it as an independent claim.

Applicants respectfully submit that claims 4-15, 20-32, 34-35, and 39 are allowable over the art of record, and respectfully request the timely issuance of a Notice of Allowance therefor.

III. Remarks Regarding Amendments to Claims 3, 36, and 40, Which Stand Rejected Under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) in view of *Malone*

Claim 3 stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) in view of *Malone*. However, Applicants have amended claim 3 herein such that it now depends from amended claim 4, which, as described above in Part II, the Examiner previously designated as allowable if amended to be rewritten in independent form, which amendment has been made herein.

Claim 36 stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) in view of *Malone*. However, Applicants have amended claim 36 herein such that it now depends from amended claim 34, which, as described above in Part II, the Examiner previously designated as allowable if amended to be rewritten in independent form, which amendment has been made herein.

Claim 40 stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) in view of *Malone*. However, Applicants have amended claim 40 herein such that it now depends from amended claim 39, which, as described above in Part II, the Examiner previously designated as allowable if amended to be rewritten in independent form, which amendment has been made herein.

Accordingly, Applicant respectfully submits that claims 3, 36, and 40 are novel and nonobvious over the art of record. Applicant respectfully requests withdrawal of the rejection of these claims under 35 U.S.C. 102, and further requests the timely issuance of a Notice of Allowance for these claims.

IV. Remarks Regarding Amendments to Claim 54, Which Stands Rejected Under 35 U.S.C. § 103 as Unpatentable Over *Malone* in view of *Watson*

Claim 54 stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103 as unpatentable over *Malone* in view of *Watson*. However, Applicants have amended claim 54 herein such that it now depends from amended claim 13, which, as described above in Part II, the Examiner previously designated as allowable if amended to be rewritten in independent form, which amendment has been made herein.

Accordingly, Applicants respectfully submit that claim 54 is novel and nonobvious over the art of record. Applicant respectfully requests withdrawal of the rejection of this claim under 35 U.S.C. 103, and further requests the timely issuance of a Notice of Allowance for this claim.

SUMMARY

In light of the above remarks, Applicants respectfully request reconsideration and withdrawal of the outstanding rejections. Applicants further submit that the application is now in condition for allowance, and earnestly solicit timely notice of the same. Should the Examiner have any questions, comments or suggestions in furtherance of the prosecution of this application, the Examiner is invited to contact the attorney of record by telephone, facsimile, or electronic mail.

Applicants believe that there are no fees due in association with this filing of this Response. However, should the Commissioner deem that any fees are due, including any fees for extensions of time, Applicants respectfully request that the Commissioner accept this a Petition Therefor, and direct that any additional fees be charged to Baker Botts L.L.P. Deposit Account No. 02-0383, Order Number 063718.0130.

Respectfully submitted,

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